

# What to do with a sick kid?



The cold and flu has arrived, and some families are already dealing with children suffering from high fevers, sneezing and coughing. With kids being sent home from school and daycare, parents have been contacting Backus at all hours wondering whether they should take their children to the ER when they spike a high fever.

According to **Dr. Tim Sullivan, a pediatrician with the Norwich Pediatric Group and the Backus Hospital Medical Staff**, unless the child is not drinking, not urinating, having trouble breathing or acting strangely, the ER is probably not the place to go. Making an appointment with his or her pediatrician might be your best bet. After they determine whether the sickness is viral or bacterial, here are a few tips from Dr. Sullivan:

■ **Make sure you push fluids as much as possible.** The more they drink the better hydrated they are and the better the chances of getting well.

■ **Make sure they get plenty of rest.** A dose or two of Motrin or Tylenol might mask symptoms and give the false impression that they are better. Later, when it wears off, they pay the price.

■ **Don't worry too much about eating.** Drinking lots of fluids is key. They generally make up for any weight loss after they are well.

■ **Dress them in thin layers of clothing.** Wrapping them in thick clothes and many blankets can do more harm than good.

■ **Try a lukewarm bath or shower.** That can help with the fever.

■ **Check with a pediatrician on the use of medicine** like Tylenol or Motrin.

■ **Pay close attention to the directions on medicine bottles.** If you are alternating medicines, write down time and dose.

Finally, **stay calm.** If you are stressed, your child's anxiety level might increase in reaction to what they see from you. And remember -- children are remarkably resilient. The 104 degree fever might be scary, but it will be gone before you know it.

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